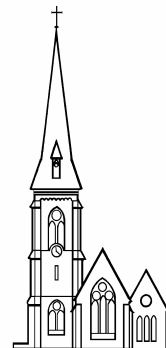




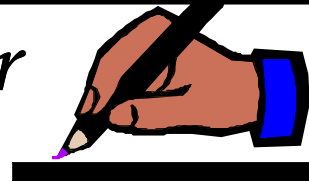
Parish of Uxbridge

**Annual Reports 2007
for the
Annual Parochial
Church Meeting**

**Sunday 27 April, 2008
at 4pm
St. Andrew's**



...from the Rector



“How very good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!” Psalm 133:1

The Uxbridge Team Ministry is unusual in the Diocese of London, in that it is one of only a few Team Ministries. By that I mean we have more than one fully fledged Parish Church (in our case we have two) in partnership working within one Parish with a single PCC. Ours is an even more unusual situation, because the spiritual traditions of our two churches are quite different.

The Team Ministry has been in operation for 20 years this year (next year is our 21st Birthday!), and from time to time people ask me about the benefits of such a Team... does it really work?

Well, I think that is a fair question to ask, and it strikes me that this year there are three things that I want to celebrate specifically about our Team Ministry that seem to be honouring to God and reflect something of his nature.

1. Enriching Spiritualities

Our differing worshipping styles and spiritualities enrich one another and offer the opportunity to deepen our lives with God.

It is always our aim to respect the differing spiritualities across the Team, and we want to retain the distinctive differences of our two churches and various congregations. It does not always come easily for us to do this, but the Clergy, and PCC are committed to leading us in this way. We don't always get this right, but there are many signs of it enriching the lives of Christians in the Parish. Events as diverse as New Wine days, Men's and Women's Breakfasts, Advent Quiet Day and Prayer Week provide ways to deepen our communion with God. Worshipping congregations as diverse as 10am Sung Mass at St. Andrew's, Songs of Praise, St. Margaret's 7pm congregation and the Mass for Mums and Toddlers offer a range of opportunities to worship the God who gives us life and redeems us. As we sensitively allow God to touch us through these different streams of spirituality people have found "Living water flowing up from within them". Of course it can sometimes be a bit scary, and we may instinctively cling on to what we know and love. Sometimes meeting God through unfamiliar forms can seem threatening or unsettling, but God often seems to challenge us through this and take us deeper.

I hope you are allowing God to put you in the position of being touched by Him through some of these opportunities. If you have not, this year, why not make it your goal in the next year.

2. Working in Partnership

There are times when it makes sense to work together as partners, meeting the needs of one another.

At Christmas we said goodbye to Claire Farley who had been our Parish Youth worker for two and a half years, and before that an Oasis Youth Student in the Parish for two years. Her last event was to organise a youth ball for about 150 young people, and a group of 30

plus 14-18 year olds had recently been to Soul Survivor. Our Youth work has never been stronger across the Parish as a whole (well not in the last 20 years anyway!), and Claire has done a magnificent job. We made a decision 10 years ago to operate our Youth work in a co-ordinated way across the Parish, rather than try to run two completely separate ministries within the two churches. It makes sense for young people who love being together with other young people, it means we have been able to employ a full time youth worker, and share other resources such as youth volunteers. I think that working together as partners across the Parish has genuinely served our young people well, and as a result many of them are displaying a passion for God and a faith which is inspiring and challenging to those of us who are older.

There are other ways in which our partnership serves us well... co-ordinated administrative support (Jane continues to do an amazing job for us), the website, a range of activities across the Parish for adults and children as well as young people, and some Parish financial management. The clergy team pray together daily, support one another, and co-operate on the handling of things like funerals, confirmation preparation etc. There is great strength in our partnership

There will of course always be things that are much more appropriately handled separately by each church, and we remain committed to retaining the integrity of each church as well.

3. Mission Focus resourced

Our combined resources also make it possible to reflect the Missionary heart of God to the town we serve.

Across the Parish there is a considerable missionary focus, and we are able to direct significant resource to this, partly because of the way our Team Ministry operates. You can read elsewhere about the work of Oasis, the Soup kitchen at St. Andrew's, Footprints, PromiseLand and much more. It is a key part of our Mission Action Plan to plant new congregations. Songs of Praise is of course now a regular vibrant congregation that has developed over the last five years, the Tuesday lunchtime Eucharist is becoming established, whilst "PromiseLand" reaching out to unchurched children, and "Soul Café" reaching out to workers in the town are both developing.

Over the next few weeks, we will be launching an "Adopt a Street" programme, hoping to encourage prayer for every street in the Parish of Uxbridge. Again this is made more possible by operating as a Team.

This missionary focus is reflected in the fact that we hope to see 30 adults and young people from the Parish confirmed on Pentecost Sunday (11th May), and also that the size of our Electoral Roll has grown steadily over that 20 year period. This year we have added over 40 additional people to the Roll across the Parish.

I am under no illusion that these encouraging signs reflect the work of God amongst us, and without the Holy Spirit we would be lifeless and stagnant. If anyone is coming to Jesus, or growing in faith, then we must recognise that this is God's work not ours. We are in his hands.

As we look to the year ahead recruiting a suitable new Youth worker is a critical matter in a difficult job market. We sense the urgency of this matter to encourage the faith and maintain the momentum that is there amongst our young people's work. We are praying and trusting God to provide for us in this matter.

Andrew
April 2008

St. Margaret's Vicar's Report

We designated the last year in St. Margaret's to be a Sabbath year, having felt called to do so by God through a variety of "nudges" from Him.

After careful discussion by the Church Council we did not feel we should close lots of our community activities down, nor that we should impose a load of rules about what is and isn't allowed in a Sabbath year.

Instead we tried to make it an opportunity for people and groups in St. Margaret's to look at ways of enjoying the blessings of the Sabbath, especially Rest and Renewal. We encouraged all meetings to spend less time on business, and more time praying together, and this had quite a profound effect on our Church Council and Congregational Leadership Teams. We also encouraged various groups to take time off, and did things like close the Coffee Bar for more frequent Quiet Days about every two months.

In truth, there were times when St. Margaret's felt far from Sabbath (!), and our programmes at Christmas and Easter were as busy as ever. At times I think we weren't bold enough, or lacked the faith to stop certain things, but it does seem to me that where we rested and trusted God, he really surprised us.

Here are just a few examples of that...

Reduced Mission Initiatives – More Adult Baptisms!

We said no to our normal Autumn Alpha programme, and several other mission initiatives. We wrestled about whether this seemed right to do, but as we did so God surprised us and brought a whole variety of people to us expressing a desire to be baptised. They had already decided for themselves under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that they wanted to follow Jesus. Many of those will also be confirmed next month.

Reduced Time for Business – More effective Meetings

We cut by half the time spent in our Council meetings discussing business matters, and spent the time praying instead. We found that we were able to get through the business we needed to, and the prayerfulness of the Council made for an atmosphere of faith and trust in God. We are encouraged by the generous giving of Church members.

Less Activity – More People

Despite (or perhaps because of!) having less activity during the year, we added around 50 new names to our Electoral Roll. Of course a few people moved on too, and so we end the year with a roll of 344 – more people than we have had as part of St. Margaret's for probably 50 years!

We were sorry to say goodbye to Claire & Jay Farley, Doug & Jo Paton, and Suzanne Hosking (although she is still part of St. Margaret's whilst training at Wycliffe), but thankful to God for all those he is bringing to St. Margaret's.

In all these things it is God's work that we celebrate, and his Spirit who brings new life.

Other highlights from the last year include the upgrade of the kitchen and flower room area (thanks especially to Carrie Moore, Gill Hodgson and others), the flourishing of our various congregations, a strengthening of our pastoral care structures, and the flow of people through our midweek community groups into worship and deepening faith.

What of the future?

In the coming year, we have several priorities that we want to attend to...

1. To focus on our mission to those who live in Uxbridge. Watch out for “Adopt a Street”, “Something for Nothing” and “Back to Church week”
2. To see two of our newer ventures grow into fully fledged congregations reaching out with the love of God - “PromiseLand” for primary school aged children and “Soul Café” for workers in the town.
3. To give better support and guidance to Root Groups and their leaders.
4. We face a challenge with our finances. We have lost a considerable source of income, as contracted lettings of our Upper Room to Market Research companies has virtually ceased. This could cost us up to £25,000. To continue to grow and develop in the ways we have been doing, we will need to fill this financial gap – which will be a real challenge to our generosity.

I continue to love being part of this Parish, and of St. Margaret's. I am grateful to so many people who serve the Parish generously using the gifts that God has given them.

Andrew
April 2008

...from the Town Centre Minister



'I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in them, will bear much fruit; apart from me, you can do nothing'. John 15:5

During the past year I have been reminded time and time again that the work of Oasis is, at heart, all about Jesus Christ. He can see what is best for the people in Uxbridge Town Centre (workers, shoppers, visitors, residents) and it is as we root ourselves in him that we are able to share the Good News of God's love and serve people as he did.

It has been encouraging to see God at work in a variety of different ways over the past year. There is not space here to mention everything that has gone on, so I will just reflect on some particular encouragements.

Sabbath Year

Over the Sabbath Year at St Margaret's, we have sought to root ourselves afresh in God, encouraging rest and abiding in him in different ways with a view to increasing our fruitfulness. One way in which we have done this is to have some quiet days away with the building staff team. While others have looked after the coffee bar (thank you so much to those who have!), we have taken time to spend a day with Jesus and with one another.

As we have stepped back, we have been deeply encouraged, recognising that we now have a structure in place through which God is really working. People coming into the coffee bar are being touched and drawn in, perhaps via Footprints or one of our other midweek activities or maybe through the pastoral care they receive. They are finding their way into Songs of Praise or one of the other midweek congregations and growing in their love for God. It is great to see.

As we have been recognising this, we have had a real sense of God speaking to us in a number of different ways and encouraging us simply to keep on going with the work. It can be demanding and draining day by day, but it has been so encouraging for us to recognise that God really is at work in the middle of it all.

Chaplaincy

During the year God has been at work opening the doors for chaplaincy ministry within various organisations in the town. The Uxbridge Town Chaplaincy seeks to provide an independent confidential listening service for people of any faith or none. In addition to working with individuals, at the invitation of managers we visit their organisation each week, making ourselves available to staff and seeking to provide a support service which is complimentary to existing provision within the organisation.

In addition to chaplaincy minority in Debenhams and with the police, we have also been invited to provide to chaplaincy to the Chimes staff and to Barnes Roffee Chartered Accountants. Leaflets have also been circulated by the management to the Chimes shops and we have been given permission to visit. The HR Department at the Civic Centre has also expressed a real interest in a Chaplaincy to the staff of Hillingdon Borough. Recognising that the whole of Hillingdon Borough is a large brief for a single chaplain, the police are also very open having an additional chaplain to cover Hayes police station (leaving me with Ruislip and Uxbridge).

All this means that there are clearly too many Chaplaincy opportunities for one person to cover. During the year we have therefore been gradually drawing others in and have begun to form an ecumenical Chaplaincy team. Please do pray for each of the following as they visit week by week:

Chimes Staff	Peter Lillystone (Waterloo Road)
Barnes Roffee	Tunde Balogun (Kingsborough)
Debenhams	Shirley Hills
Police	June Hughman
Chimes Shops	June Hughman
(Hayes Police Station	Wyn Price (Kingston Lane) tbc)

Staffing

We were sad to say good-bye to **Suzanne Hosking** in September. She has done a great job working as a volunteer for Oasis each Wednesday. Among other things she visited many companies in the town on behalf of Oasis and has therefore vastly expanded our contact in the town. Following her recommendation for training for ordained ministry, she left us to start training at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford in September. We are deeply grateful to her for all she has given and have been praying that God will continue to lead her on this next stage of her journey with him.

More recently, it has been great to have **Patrick Colbert** join us as our new Saturday Pastoral Worker and Coffee Bar Manager. During the year we became aware that, whilst there are many encouraging signs of God at work in and through the week-day coffee bar, Saturday have been more of a struggle. There has been no dedicated pastoral worker and, whilst our Saturday Coffee Bar volunteers serve with amazing hearts, there has, in all honesty, not been adequate support available for them. With this in mind, the St Margaret's Church Council took the decision to appoint a dedicated Saturday worker and it was great to have Patrick start work with us on April 6th.

On a very different note, after six years of amazingly faithful service, **Christine Benner** stepped aside from leadership of Praymates at Christmas. She has done an amazing job and we are deeply grateful to her for all that she has given of herself in this role - Praymates has flourished during that time and it is in no small measure to the dedicated work of Christine and her team. We are very grateful to **Jo Mackin** for stepping into the leadership of role.

Songs of Praise

During the year Songs of Praise has continued to grow and develop. Recognising that people in Songs of Praise are at all different stages on the spiritual journey, we held our first 'Senior' Alpha course during the Spring offering the opportunity for people to come and explore the Christian faith and raise any questions they had. By all accounts it was a good and valuable time.

On a very different note, as we sought to be outward looking, we held two tea dances during the year. Both attracted over 70 people and it was great to see people thoroughly enjoying everything from waltzes and foxtrots to jives and the hokey cokey!

Oasis for Workers

Chris Green has reported elsewhere about the ministry of Oasis with workers. In this area, it has been especially encouraging to see the way in which support for Christian workers has developed slowly but surely during the year. As part of the Sabbath year, Chris and I begun to meet to pray for the town each Wednesday morning; now other folk working in the town are dropping in to join us most weeks. The friendship and prayerful support through the lunchtime group has been gradually growing. An e-mailed 'thought for the week' helps keep us in touch, as do the one-to-one meetings that Chris and I have with a number of different folk. The regular programme of business events has also continued and it has been great to see a number of Christian workers coming with their colleagues during the course of the year.

But I have a real sense of the need for something more in this area. My dream is to see the Spirit of God blowing through workplaces in the town. For Christians to be gripped with a vision of what God could do in their workplaces and among their colleagues. For them to see lives touched and transformed and healed as the Spirit of God moves. For them to be excited and fired up about the way in which he can use them in building his Kingdom. For them to be thrilled by lives being touched and transformed and healed as the Spirit of God moves through the places where they work.

Can this dream become a reality? Yes I believe the potential is there. We believe the next step is seeking to start a 'café' style congregation for workers - we are in fact aiming to launch 'Soul Café' once a month in Baroosh from the beginning of October. Imagine a place in where people could come and relax together over refreshments. Where Christians could come and worship God and be renewed, refreshed and excited by him. Where they could comfortably bring their colleagues. Where people searching for God could come and experience him at work. Where stories of what he has been doing are shared and people encouraged. Where supportive friendships could be built and people prayed for. Where God is at work by his Spirit captivating and transforming hearts and minds and lives. It is an exciting thought and one that we believe God is leading us towards. Please join us in praying and seeking him

And Finally...

As I write this report I recognise that many people are involved in the work of Oasis in so many different ways. It is impossible to mention you all but I am just so grateful for our partnership in the gospel - thank you so much for all the you are and all you do. But most of all I am grateful to God for all he is and all he is doing and I simply look to him as we go on into the future together. As I have been reminded a number of times during the year '*unless the Lord builds the house, its labourers labour in vain*' (Psalm 127:1)

Vicar's Report (St. Andrew's)



This year at St Andrew's may on the surface seem to have been slow moving but under the surface there has been an enormous amount of praying, planning and preparation work. This foundational work will bear fruit in the years to come.

On the physical level this has been a year when we have taken an increased pride in our church building. The physical appearance of the building is always an indicator of the spiritual health of a church. People are seldom attracted to unkempt and a dingy building, having a physically welcoming building is part of a mission-orientated church.

I am grateful to the small but hardworking team who are making a difference in St Andrew's. Already the flowerbeds around the church have been renewed. The Car park has been extended, the Church hall ceiling has been repaired and defective and dangerous paving slabs on the hall steps have been replaced. I am enormously grateful to David Skelton, Vince Peacock and to Malcolm Edginton who have masterminded these projects and to all those willing volunteers who came to join in both the work and the fun.

Plans for the renewal of the Church floor are well underway but having received the estimates from the architect. There will be an inevitable delay while we think through the considerable cost of the various options and begin to source funding.

Alongside the physical aspects of making our church building brighter, safer and more welcoming are all the non-physical, spiritual aspects of being church together.

One of the key areas that we have begun to look at is the way we affirm children in our different services. We have created new service cards for our very popular Wednesday morning Mass for Mums and Toddlers and made the service more song based. In the same way, at the request of our Junior Church Leaders we have revised the service cards for our All Age Mass and made the Service both more flexible and more accessible. However, in relation to our monthly All Age services, to my mind the most exciting development has been the notion that alongside the existing pattern of Junior church as a whole leading us at Harvest, Christmas and Mothering Sunday, the various groups of Junior church will in future take a turn leading us on three other occasions during the year. This is a quiet but deeply significant step. Having the children share what they have been learning will not only affirm them, it will also send an important signal that we value them and want to learn from them.

I am extremely grateful for all the prayer, planning and hard work put in by our Junior Church leaders and I ask you to pray for their ongoing spiritual health and for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in key ministry. I would also like to say thank you and ask your prayers for the youth work team especially as they take on extra work during this time of waiting for the appointment of a new Youth worker.

I would also like to record my thanks to our servers, to our choir and Church orchestra and to Lee Halford for all the hours of prayerful preparation and practicing they put in to ensure our worship is welcoming and worthy of our Lord. Especial thanks are due to Lee for his help in compiling our new Supplementary Hymn book.

I would also like to say an enormous thank you to Lee in his capacity as our extremely capable and hard working treasurer and also to Kevin Ogilvie, our Stewardship recorder. You will be aware that we started the year with a projected deficit of over £17,000 but thanks to Lee and Kevin and all those who helped with the our Stewardship campaign we have turned things round and we are now in the black!

St Andrew's has hosted two significant spirituality events in the last year. The first was the parish prayer week last May and which we now intend to make an annual event. (Fr Dermot Tredget, a Benedictine monk from Douai abbey is already booked to speak this year on Thursday the 15th of May.) The second event during the last year was our hosting and leading six spirituality sessions for the Willesden Area Readers training course. Again this helps to show what St Andrew's has to offer and represent a contribution to the wider church.

In terms of Social action, during the last year SALSA has changed its name to the Soup Kitchen at St Andrew's. This clarifies its role and helps to fend off being confused with a local dance club of the same name. The one sadness is that just recently Hillingdon Borough Council decided to 'end the provision of the single persons' advice sessions.' This means that with the exception of Alcoholics Anonymous, the advice clinics have either stopped or been retracted back into the Civic Centre over the road and no longer take place here after food has been served. Despite this disappointment Paul Clargo and his team of volunteers continue to do the work they set out to do and serve with great devotion and sensitivity.

Despite the withdrawal of Council provision for Thursday afternoons, the Council has nevertheless asked me to thank the members of St Andrew's for allowing them to use our Church hall to run the Winter months Night shelter again this year. The Shelter was an enormous success and was run smoothly, efficiently and with a minimum of disruption. I want to record my thanks to Helen Ogilvie, Vince Peacock, Rebecca Measure and all those who helped in this year's organisation.

Vince, as you know, steps down as Church warden at this APCM and I am sure that all the members of St Andrew's would want me to record our thanks for all he has managed to do over the last year. We are likewise grateful to Helen for all that she has done and are extremely pleased that she has indicated that she would like to stand again at this year's election.

By far the most far-reaching event of the last year was our Church Envisioning day. This was extremely well attended. It was a profoundly prayerful day when all those present were involved in genuinely asking Our Lord to give us a glimpse of what he would like to see happening in his church here in the next few years. The results were both challenging and deeply moving. Processing the sheer volume of ideas and working out how we are going to honour, own and respond to them has taken longer than we expected but the new Mission Action Plan has now been approved by the Church Council and is awaiting its launch. I am extremely grateful to various committees and especially to Rosie Halford, Kathy Brett and Jane Hills in the Parish office for all the many hours we have spent prayerfully putting together what I think is an extremely exciting and forward looking Mission Action Plan.

The preparation is now over and I am looking forward to people reading it, catching the vision and coming forward to say that they want to be of service to God by being part of what He is doing here at St Andrew's.

Father Cliff. Bowman
Vicar of St Andrew's Uxbridge.

Outreach Children's Work Co-ordinator (O.C.W.C)

Annual Report

O.C.W.C. Role - I have been employed as the O.C.W.C. since September 2007 and accepted a permanent offer of employment for this position in March 2008. I am employed to work part time, 16 hours per week. I successfully completed my induction programme with the exception of meeting with the Coffee Bar Manager and the Pastoral Workers to gain insight into their roles. Included in my weekly employment are weekly prayer times, meetings and other events. I am self management in my diary and record keeping. I can struggle with keeping to allocated working hours and have now structured a non-working day off each week (Monday) which I try to keep to. I am also monitoring my working hours more closely with my Line Manager. It is recognised that it is impossible to limit working hours to 16 per week at certain times but, I am flexible in taking accrued hours at quieter times of the year. I recognise that there will never be enough time to do all that I want to do and that I need to be careful in prioritising. I would like to work towards a church holiday club, church events where people can just enjoy being together and community events where church and community come together. I am in the habit of meeting with my mentor on a regular basis and this is proving valuable, with a good relationship continuing to be built. I recognise that the need to evaluate my work on a more regular basis is necessary, to enable me to focus more on the positive of what I have achieved. An Outreach Children's Work Management Team (O.C.W.M.T.) is now in place to help me to manage the Outreach Children's Work.

School Assemblies / Links - I have been working alongside the clergy in local school assemblies and I am slowly growing in confidence. I am also personally building links with these schools. I attend the staff meeting each term when staff involvement with St. Andrew's school is discussed/ planned. My main focus is Whitehall Infants School, Whitehall Juniors School and Hermitage Primary but, I have involvement with St. Andrew's School assemblies when time permits – but, definitely for main school Eucharists/ services. I have now booked dates when I will go into schools to lead assembly unsupported by clergy. I am also scheduled to be involved with school visits to church and other sessions in schools when appropriate.

PromiseLand - "To see the lives of unchurched children and their families transformed through knowing God's love and living Christ's way".

PromiseLand has now been running for over three years, since February 2005. Since my employment I believe that PromiseLand is a calmer and more focused environment. We have a faithful, committed team of volunteers although we recognise the need to recruit more helpers. We need to build a leadership team to work with the planning, relieve some of the teaching pressure and ensure the children have varied, stimulating learning experiences. We also need to establish a set up/ take down team for events. The O.C.W.M.T. are currently looking at job descriptions within PromiseLand as well as addressing the issues of team building.

An average of 40 children attend each month, some of whom attend schools other than St. Andrew's within the Borough. Most recently, our Easter Extravaganza attracted the highest percentage of unchurched children that PromiseLand has seen – I believe due to strengthening local school links and advertising through these schools. PromiseLand is currently open to children aged 5 years through to school year 6. I am concerned that we are not meeting the needs of the children at the older end of the spectrum. The attendance of school year 6 children has fallen to non-existent. We have had discussions regarding age range and the possibility of offering more relevant opportunities for these older children.

Since September 2006 PromiseLand has been running at The Uxbridge Centre, The Greenway and PromiseLand continues to take place on a Friday evening. The Parents Group is still running but, this needs further structuring and development. The purchasing of new equipment is being addressed. The need for a technical team is very much evident.

PromiseLand is currently running at one event per month. We are still hoping to increase this to two events per month.

One-off Parish Events – 31.10.07 – Pumpkin Splash & Monster Bash - The most significant change to this event that I made was to hold both parties at the same venue. This was much easier for parents to attend when they had children in both age groups. A good team was drawn together (especially in set up) and the parties were relaxed, organised and fun. We received excellent feedback from the team, children that attended and parents.

One-off Parish Events – 09.12.07 – Christingle – This service was well attended and enjoyed. Clarification is needed with regards to which management this service falls under and who will be responsible for planning.

One-off Parish Events – 21.03.08 – Easter Extravaganza - This event was held in conjunction with PromiseLand. We had a good number of unchurched children attend. Advertising was permitted through schools that have previously declined. A good team was drawn together and there was excellent availability of activities on offer. We received excellent feedback from the team, children that attended and parents.

Further Training - I attended a Children's Ministry conference in Eastbourne in January 2008 (Fri – Sun), which I very much enjoyed. This included keynote speakers, workshops, seminars, resource displays and worship.

I attended a CPAS day training course in February 2008.

I am keen to attend training programmes on working with children/ adults with Special Needs.

Further training events are invaluable for further learning and networking and I appreciate the opportunity to attend training events as and when they are appropriate.

Confirmation Classes for Young People - I am currently leading the confirmation classes for young people with Rev'd Caz Dunk, in this instance as there is no Youth Worker employed within the Parish. It is recognised that this may not be within the O.C.W.C.'s remit in the future although many of the young people are in school year 6. On a positive note this is enabling me to continue links with young people that are no longer attending PromiseLand. Care must be taken that there is support post-confirmation and post-school year 6 for these children.

Emma Grace Aldons-Blackman
21.04.2008

St. Andrew's Church Warden's report

FABRIC



This last year has been financially demanding. We have had a number of broken windows to repair. On the south side of the church we have had the Annunciation window broken along with, but not at the same time the Adoration of the Shepherds and Magi window were also broken. These have taken some time and money to repair as the stained glass has to be matched and hand made. Window guards have now been fitted. The glass in the door to the children's room was smashed as well as the glass in the side panel of the fire exit on the north side of the church from the link corridor. Glass was also smashed in the choir vestry door. Although these have now been repaired, not all costs are ever fully recovered from the insurance companies.

We have also looked at the walls in the Holy Spirit chapel. The outside drain pipe has been looked at and the architect has advised that we need to use a special paint that will allow the walls of the chapel to breath. This will then let us look at redecorating the chapel. The same paint should be used in the main church and this is something we will be able to look at in the future. There was also some damage to the chancel roof, this has now been completed.

The church floor continues to be a problem both through safety and maintaining it. The architect has also given us some ideas of what can be done that will make the floor safe and yet not change the characteristics of the building. This work will be ongoing as the new council take over.

On maintenance we have entered into a gutter maintenance contract for a company to clear and maintain the church and hall gutters for the next year. We have also had some trees in the wild life area between the car park and the school pruned or removed as they were causing problems and may have become dangerous if not dealt with. The main church door was re- varnished as an old repair had faded. The notice board has been repaired on a number of occasions. The hall roof was falling apart and has now been replaced (although not painted yet), new light tubes were fitted at the same time. Other general maintenance was carried out throughout the church buildings.

The car park has been a problem in the past with unauthorised parking, so this year we took a new approach and set up a parking enforcement system. This has proved to be a success and now it is very rare for people to park in the car park without a permit. This has allowed us to rent out further places. In addition to this a working group have extended the bottom end of the car park gaining a further three places which have now been filled from our waiting list. This will increase our income from the car park.

Some of this work was done by specialists, but a lot was done by volunteers and I would like to thank all those who have given their time and effort to help the church.

Vincent Peacock
Church Warden

St. Margaret's Church Warden's report

Building Matter



Once again we must offer our heartfelt thanks to Carrie Moore and her team of 'handymen' for their sterling efforts throughout the past year. Carrie is responsible for the day-to-day management and running of the church building, a busy and challenging role that she carries out tirelessly for our benefit.

The highlight of this year's building work has undoubtedly been the refurbishment of the kitchen, flower/utility area and downstairs toilets. The work took place in August during which time the coffee bar had to remain closed. This was particularly difficult for many of our loyal customers but we feel sure that the improvements more than made up for the inconvenience.

Several sections of our beautiful stained glass windows were vandalised and subsequently repaired and we are looking into some form of protection for the most vulnerable window. The south door also suffered from some minor vandalism but was quickly repaired. Other minor works carried out this year include the clearing of the gutters and refurbishment of the anti-pigeon measures. The stonework on the south side of the building has begun to deteriorate rapidly and we plan to have the relevant areas sealed in the short term before planning/costing subsequent repairs.

The process of developing access to the upper room for the elderly/disabled has somewhat stalled this year as investigations into possible grants drew a blank. It now appears that we will need to fund the project ourselves and the Building Working Group will actively pursue options and ideas over the next few months. On the subject of the upper room, serious concerns were raised regarding the safety of the children attending their groups given that it is not possible to lock the windows. Safety guards are being constructed to ensure the little ones are kept safe whilst allowing the windows to be opened during the warmer summer months.

We shall shortly be holding another "Spring Clean" when we shall be cleaning and tidying various parts of the building so that we can continue to worship God in our beautiful clean Church.

Martin & Gill.

...from the Curate's perspective

I remember this time last year reflecting on my first few months in the parish feeling like, in some respects, I hadn't even 'landed'. Everything still seemed very new and I felt like the learning curve was, at times, almost vertical.

As I think back over this past year I'm aware that many of the new relationships of a year ago have flourished, as has my confidence in being the parish curate. Part of this is due, no doubt, to the passage of time and to some good people to learn from. Yet I'm also aware of how precious words of encouragement and support are as we "*spur one another on toward love and good deeds*".¹ I have been encouraged by your encouragement and have grown through it.

There have been many other encouragements during the year as we have sought God together in the worship and vision of the parish. Being part of the St Andrew's Envisioning process has been exciting as, under Father Cliff's leadership, we've listened to God for the 'shape of things to come.' Similarly, learning together at St Margaret's what it means to be people of Sabbath rest amid the hustle and bustle of life, has been a rewarding, if somewhat challenging process. Both these have reminded me again of our dependency upon God for all we are and do, and that anything of eternal worth in His Kingdom springs from lives lived under His Lordship and fuelled with His energy.

In St Margaret's evening service (a service I am especially involved with), as we've learnt more about being equipped by God's Holy Spirit, it's been a thrill and a challenge to see some of our young people stepping out to serve in new ways. And as we've sensed God's gentle nudging to be more open to His work in and through us, we have enjoyed some guest speakers and a couple of workshops exploring and experiencing this further. My hope for this coming year is that we will continue to be open to God in our worship and challenged to take steps outside our comfort zone.

There have been a few more 'firsts' for me this year including my first baptism (thanks to the Hendersons who were courageous enough to provide the baby), marriage preparation, a preaching course (watch out for some new preachers and apply your gift of encouragement to them), and working alongside 17 Yr 6's as they prepare for confirmation. All have been a lot of fun, and it's been an honour journeying with people in this way.

The *BIG* first of this year has to be presiding at communion following my priesting in June. There were a few nervous moments, but yet again, the encouragement and support I've received has spurred me on. It was wonderful to celebrate this particular moment in my journey with you (and yet again enjoy the Uxbridge parish gift of celebration and parties). I hope and pray I shall never lose the sense of awesome privilege in serving in this way.

There are so many things of the year to be thankful for: a great team of people, God's provision and strength, lives touched and reflecting the new life of Jesus, a place I've increasingly found to be home, and the evidences of God at work. Yet there's always the sense that God has not finished His work: in me, in you, in the parish, in Uxbridge. So my prayer for this coming year is that we will together "*press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of us*"². and that, "being rooted and established in love", we will together understand more of the immensity of Christ's love.³

¹ Hebs 10:24, ² Phils 3:14, ³ Eph 3:17,18



Financial Activities



The financial activities of St Margaret's and St Andrew's are directed and monitored by the PCC as the legal body. Accordingly the accounts for the two churches are brought together into a single PCC end of year report and audited as required under the rules laid down by the Diocese and the Charity Commission. If you require a full copy of the accounts then copies are available at the APCM or they can be obtained from the Parish Office, Tony Rapson (Treasurer St M's) or Lee Halford (Treasurer St A's) and if not already, it is hoped to have them scanned and made available on the Parish Web Site.

The Parish of Uxbridge is very fortunate as through the generosity of those who came before us there are a number of Trust Funds that underpin what we do today. There are legal restrictions on the use of the capital of the Trust Funds. The income, (interest, rents and dividends) can be used for furthering the work of Christ in the Parish of Uxbridge. Each year both churches plan to use this income in full and if we use more it reduces the capital value or reserve held. Overall this has been a good year and the value of the Parish has risen from £1.59 Million to £1.74 Million. It is important to remember that about a 1/3rd of this is in property and most of the rest is in capital share accounts that cannot be freely used. It is only the income that can be used relatively freely and all of this (and in the case of St Margaret's some of the reserve) has been used this year. Whilst the increase above looks very good the vast majority of it is down to the revaluation of St Peter's House, which had not been revalued for some time. The value listed in the 2006 accounts was £225,000 but was revalued at £359,950 in 2007 with St Margaret's making a payment of £239,967 (2/3) to St Andrew's, thereby making St Peter's House a Parish assets for Parish use as approved by the PCC. The remainder of the increase is down to the inclusion of the SALSA accounts into the St Andrew's elements of the accounts.

Other highlights include an increase in Stewardship at both churches and at St Andrew's increase in both Hall and Car Park income. At St Margaret's a reduction in the Room Hire contract reduced income but this was offset by increased giving. Also of note at St Margaret's is that, in addition to the £21,000 paid on repair and maintenance, another £18,000 from allocated reserves was contributed to the refurbishment of the kitchen.

This year for the first time, and in addition to the purely financial statement, the PCC Report in the formal accounts has included a statement recognising the non-financial giving provided by members of both churches as follows:

'In addition to these financial activities, a great amount of time, the value of which is impossible to reflect in these financial statements, is donated by a large and diverse group of volunteers involved in every aspect of the work of the Church.'

Tony Rapson
Honorary Treasurer
St Margaret's

Lee Halford
Honorary Treasurer
St Andrew's

Report from the meetings of Hillingdon Deanery Synod
held for the period April 2007 to March 2008.
by Helen Ogilvie
(Hillingdon Deanery Representative -St Andrews Church)

The meetings at Hillingdon Deanery have covered a wide variety of topics.
The main presentations at our meetings have included:

The meeting in June 2007 had Rachel Treweek our Archdeacon as its main speaker, who spoke about her first year in post. The word Arch in her title suggest a bridge and that is very much what she sees her role one of relationship and response. This is a nicer thought than that an archdeacon is the crook at the top of a Bishops staff. As Archdeacon she is able to see the bigger picture – which is both a privilege and very frustrating! – and can stand back from a situation in order to make a more considered response after listening to all sides. But knowing the local churches she is in a far better position to “argue our case” - but reminded us that we are still all one church.

She also spoke of the good things she had experienced had been about the grace and fellowship, the immense diversity of the Church in London. She was also struck by people’s energy and resourcefulness and enjoyed their openness and honesty.

The not so good things were the Cynicism and suspicion that was creeping in and the blame culture that makes it difficult for people to say sorry. Her pet hate has been when people don’t dare to say what they really mean, but “Moan and whisper in corners”. Her aim is always “to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God” (Micah 6:8).

The meeting in October the main speaker was Ann Richardson, Chaplain to Deaf and Deafblind People and Vera Hunt a deaf ordained minister. Ann presented an extremely interesting and informative overview of the challenges, difficulties, problems and achievements of deaf and deafblind people within the church in the diocese of London. Introducing synod to the isolation and challenge of attending a hearing church, when you are deaf or deafblind.

Vera Hunt gave a moving and informative talk regarding her journey to God and her calling to the ordained ministry; with particular regard to the challenges she faced as a deaf person within (and without) the church.

The last meeting of the year was in February and our main speaker was Graham Noyce - Willesden Area Advisor for spirituality who led us in a Eucharist where we had the opportunity to try out various different styles of Prayer in different parts of the church. This was very calming for me and I really enjoyed the peace and quiet it brought to me, after a busy day and the rush to make the meeting.

One thing that struck me was that even though the meeting was held in Yiewsley (known to be a rougher part of the borough), and the church is on the high street. I did not hear a single two tone from the emergency services all evening. In a meeting at St Andrew’s you will most certainly hear the emergency services going past at great speed. Perhaps I secretly missed it.

Deanery Synod Report from St. Margaret's

Deanery Synod meetings occur about 4 times a year so it is not arduous being the Representative for the church. However it is good to be able to go to most meetings or one does not get to know other representatives at all. All the churches in our area have representatives and many have held the post for years.

The meetings usually start with a communion service followed by refreshments and two short presentations from two different churches. These are often amusingly presented and extremely informative, giving an insight into whatever that church or clergy person, is particularly adept at. Often the talks are accompanied by computer generated displays and are usually very well presented. Meetings are held at a different church venue each time and directions are given as to how to get there, with parking details if any.

It has been suggested that St Margaret's is due to make a presentation soon as we have not done this for quite a while. Our sister church (St Andrew's) did a presentation a little while ago and the representative there is also the Deanery Treasurer, so we, (the two churches) are usually well informed as to financial matters to do with Synod.

St Margaret's is well positioned in the community to be able to minister to our various congregations and Town centre ministries, and many of the churches envy us the continuing possibilities that this presents, but other churches may not have the parking restrictions that we have. (Maybe this is why we have not done our presentation yet ?) I am sure Andrew has some plans in this direction and I will be sorry to miss the presentation as I am standing down as representative this time. However I am happy to help with anything as required.

Barbara Rhodes

Deanery Synod rep for St Margaret's

Oasis Coffee Bar



The week day coffee bar remains as ever a very busy place, serving a variety of people in a variety of ways. We are continually trying to be more accessible to more people. With this in mind we undertook a major refurbishment program last year, which involved a completely new kitchen along with toilet and utility room refit. This has made both areas more pleasant and user friendly.

The utility area has more storage space so making it clearer for those queuing and there is now a baby changing unit in the ladies/disabled cubicle. The kitchen is now much brighter and provides an easier working environment. The refit has also enabled us to create space for a new bean to cup coffee machine, offering a larger range of affordable speciality coffees.

We continue to minister to all who seek help and comfort, in a relaxed atmosphere, but are always mindful of the security issues of a town centre venue. We signed up last year to the 'Uxbridge Against Crime' (UBAC) scheme. This has helped us to develop close relationships with both town centre security and town centre police, with a two way radio system available to call for immediate assistance. We have also added two large boards on to the large back wall of the coffee bar, which both add to the relaxed atmosphere and provide useful information on the services provided with in St. Margaret's church



live well work well live well work well

Outreach Pastoral Workers Report



Things are really happening at our weekday services! There are an increasing number of people attending and we are excited to have had some Baptisms taking place at Songs of Praise on a Tuesday, and at the Holy Communion services on a Thursday and Friday. Some of these people are going on to be confirmed in May.

It is a privilege for us to listen and pray with those who are seeking help and support, and to provide practical care where needed. We aim to build relationships with people and try to help them find God in the midst of their circumstances. Our hope is that we can also help them to deepen their relationship with Him and grow in understanding of the Christian faith.

We continue to be encouraged and inspired by the signs of God working in the lives of those who come into the coffee bar, and the church, during the week and we pray that this will continue through the coming year.

Tina Rapson and Shirley Hills
Outreach Pastoral Workers



Report on PCC Activity for The Year 2007-2008

There were four full PCC meetings during the year, plus an extraordinary one in September to discuss arrangements for appointing a new Parish Youth Worker to replace Claire Farley. There was also an "away day" for the PCC members in November, led by Neil Evans, with much positive feedback shared at the December PCC meeting - there had been a sense of gentle honesty, and discussion aimed at bringing mutual trust and respect both between individuals and the two churches. This sense of unity in the Holy Spirit was further developed by aiming to spend more time at church council and PCC meetings in prayer and listening to the Lord, not only in the just-ended Sabbath Year for St Margaret's but as a general rule for the future.

Naturally, arrangements for the appointment of a new Youth Worker came high on the agenda for both the December and February meetings, and Claire made a guest appearance at the December meeting to share a lively illustrated report on the many activities she and Jonathan had led for the young people during the previous few months, notably taking a large group to Soul Survivor in the summer, and inviting Rachel Gardner from the Romance Academy in Harrow (featured in a recent TV documentary) to lead an open, honest and often humorous discussion about Christian values in relationships.

The PCC formally thanked Claire for all her wonderful work, and there was also a vote of thanks to Paul Hyland for his behind-the-scenes support of Claire as her line manager. Paul is now busy working behind the scenes on the new-look Parish Magazine! The PCC helped to organise a lovely farewell party for Claire and Jonathan at St Andrew's Hall just before they left Uxbridge for their new life in Warwick.

On the evening I am typing this, there has been a special prayer meeting for God to provide the person of His choice to fill Claire's shoes before too long. On a more positive note, Emma Aldons Blackman has made a wonderful start as Outreach Children's Work Co-ordinator, and the PCC gladly approved her permanent appointment, and discussed how best to support her in her role. There was also discussion towards the drawing-up of a policy for vulnerable people within the parish, and the December meeting included a proposal to appoint a paid Saturday coffee bar worker, to fulfil a similar role to that of Carrie Moore and Tina/Shirley during the week, - as it had been felt by Saturday volunteers that there was a real need for more structured support for both volunteers and visitors. I am pleased to say that this appointment was made within a few weeks, and we have the blessing of Patrick Colbert's services in this post.

The main financial discussion of the year was held at the December meeting, where Tony Rapson and Lee Halford clearly presented the respective church budget proposals for 2008 for PCC approval. The 2007 Parish accounts were then passed to the auditors, and a special PCC meeting to approve the audited accounts was held after the separate St Andrew's and St Margaret's Church Council meetings on 2nd April.

There was also a proposal from June to think about setting up an ecumenical "Street Pastors" scheme for Friday and Saturday nights in the town centre (similar to fruitful schemes being run by churches in Brixton and Watford), which is now beginning to take shape, and a DVD about the Brixton scheme is due to be shown at the first PCC meeting of the new year. June also shared the challenging but good news that because of the increased demand for the services of a chaplain around the town centre, e.g. by those employed in the Police, the London Borough of Hillingdon, and (encouragingly) both the Chimes and the Mall -formerly Pavillions - shopping centres, a training day would soon be offered for anyone interested in working alongside her as a lay town centre chaplain.

The last full PCC meeting before the APCM was held on Wednesday 28th February, with a last-minute change of venue to St Andrew's Hall. One item that was discussed was the new electronic Parish calendar, linked to Google, which will hopefully make double-bookings like this a thing of the past! Anyone with a Google e-mail account will be able to look at the Calendar, and Parish staff will be able to add or change information about events or room bookings. The PCC wishes to thank Kevin Ogilvie and Jane Hills for all their hard work on this!

Last but not least, Andrew informed the PCC that their secretary of the last two years, Jill Hingyi, had decided to stand down at the forthcoming APCM, and her replacement, Barbara Peacock, had already been recruited. Jill would value your prayers about what to do next around the parish, and is planning to attend the town centre chaplaincy training day this Saturday and seeing how she feels....

PCC Worship & Spirituality Group



Over the past year we continued to schedule a calendar of spiritual events that encompasses a mixed balance of spirituality.

A prayer week happened last May. Something like this hadn't happened for many years in the parish. It was an opportunity to experience and explore prayer in a formal and informal way. We have another opportunity for a prayer week again this May.

We have had the opportunity to attend separate men's and women's events as well as joint events.

At our recent meeting we discussed our liturgy/worship within our joint parish services and the question was put do we need to change the pattern of parish services?

***Give to the Lord the glory he deserves!
Bring your offering and come to worship him.
Worship the Lord in all his holy splendour.
1 chronicles 16:29***

St. Andrew's Junior Church



The last year has, as always, been very lively and busy as far as children's activities are concerned and first of all I would like to take the opportunity to thank the wonderful team of dedicated, enthusiastic leaders who are involved with Junior Church and without them nothing would be possible and some are there every week .

Each week we provide activities for anywhere between 30-40 children from pre-school to teenagers to help nurture their faith and love of God. During the course of the year we have had some weeks when all the Junior Church have come together for joint activities ranging from craft to the inevitable end of term parties (which accounts for their excitability when they return to church). This year we also hosted the annual Palm Sunday service and provided craft activities for the under 9's

The period immediately before Christmas is always one of the busiest as the children are making decorations for the tree and also practising for a presentation in church during the December Family Service. Again this year our Mary and Joseph Posada figures made their Advent visit to homes of members of the congregation (not only those with children) and were accompanied by a digital camera.

We have been involved in more presentations in church this year not just December, also October for Harvest and March for Mothering Sunday. There are more to come so if you want to see what the children get up to when they disappear into the hall please come along to Family Service in May, June or July – we'll be there!

We are always pleased to welcome new members to the team so if anyone feels they would like to become involved with any aspect of Junior Church activities please speak to me – the more the merrier!!

Carol Connolly - Junior Church Co-Ordinator

Care & Support at St. Andrew's

We continue to be a small dedicated group. Over the past year we have reviewed:

- How effective we are as a group?
- How we can effectively care for each member of our congregation?
- Who's doing what?

We continue to be responsive to all in need in a variety of ways. Listening and showing care, visiting those who are unwell or in hospital, caring for people at vulnerable times by listening and praying. Sending cards for specific life cycles. The congregation offering practical help to those in specific times of need, co-ordinated by this group.

The future and part of our MAP is to create a new style pastoral prayer team. We are also going to update our list of those who can offer practical help at specific times of need.

1 Corinthians 12:25

This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other equally.

As God shows his care for us by protecting, providing, and preserving, so we can show his care to others by doing the same for them.



Footprints



I have been running this group for seven years now and have seen the group grow from strength to strength. We now have over twenty members with a regular attendance of about fifteen

Several of our members have health problems, and we miss seeing them on a regular basis but its great to see them when they can make it, and I do my best to keep in touch on the telephone when I can.

During the past year we have had quite a large number of new members. Some came only a few times, others are coming regularly. We have several newly bereaved and it has been very rewarding to see the progress they are making in coming to terms with their problems, adjusting to the changes and beginning to move on with their lives.

I have been very conscious of the God's presence in all this, particularly as several of the group are becoming more involved in Church life by attending Songs of Praise, mid week services and social activities. The other thing that is noticeable is the love and care that all the members have for each other. They are so supportive and many strong friendships have developed.

I am particularly grateful to a small number of regular helpers who are extremely reliable and without whom life would be very difficult. Thank you to them all for their love and support.

If there is one thing that worries me it is the matter of access to the Upper Room and the fact that we have still not resolved the issue of the Stair lift. Many of the members find the stairs difficult and some former members are no longer able to attend the group because they cannot manage the stairs. I sincerely hope that this matter will be given priority so that access is no longer a problem.

Gillian Hodgson.

St. Margaret's Flower Report



Since the last report we have had two new ladies join the rota, working mainly in the Chapel, ably helped until they felt more confident, by one of our other flower arrangers.

All the flower arrangers have enjoyed decorating a special place in the church at Harvest, Christmas and Easter and have tried to produce something a little different each time. By the comments received, the congregations have appreciated their efforts very much.

An approaching Mother's day saw the available ladies having a small social get together and making bunches of daffodils for the children to give to their Mum on the Sunday.

We now have two groups of arrangers, one looking after the chapel flowers on a Wednesday, and the other doing the Porch and Main Altar ready for the weekend. This seems to suit all the ladies and keeps the flowers fresher as they are watered more often. Flowers are expensive at the moment so we try to keep them going as long as possible.

If anyone would like to join the group they would be welcome, but some basic knowledge would be an advantage. We are happy to show people what to do if they have not done it before.

Several weddings are planned for the coming months and we try to make the arrangements even more special for the brides. If anyone has a special occasion they would like an arrangement done in church for, please speak to Barbara. Donations towards the cost of the weekly flowers, are always welcome.

Barbara Rhodes



Oasis for Workers

live well work well

Pressed in on all sides by demands for more work, increased performance and better results the workers ministry provides a true Oasis from the stresses of work in Uxbridge.

Meeting in the morning for prayer and at lunchtime for a time of fellowship and sharing has been an encouragement for many Christians. God has used these times to encourage people to believe that He is really interested in all the aspects of our working lives and wants to participate in all the ups and downs that are part of daily work life.

Gradually over the past year a community of people meeting on Wednesdays under the leadership of Chris Green and June Hughman have shared their lives together and prayed for their work situations. Through prayer, work colleagues have been miraculously healed of serious illness and this has brought encouragement to everyone and a witness to the work of God in all our lives.

At lunchtimes we are currently meeting in Baroosh and we plan to start a café style congregation to meet once a month at this venue to which Christians working in the town can bring their work colleagues. God willing this should start in October.

The regular business lunches and breakfasts have drawn in new people and we have been blessed over the past year with speakers such as Fiona Castle and Gary Streeter MP. These events are not only a great blessing in themselves but also enable June and Chris to follow up new contacts. We believe that the café style congregation will enable us to build more intimate contact with these workers so that the Kingdom of God will grow in many workplaces in Uxbridge.

During the past year we have been aware of just how God opens doors and that he is in control of all things. Early in 2007 Chris and Suzanne tried many times to get an opening into the people working at the Civic Centre. Without success. Then out of the blue in November Chris got a phone call from the head of human resources at the council. This led to him doing some work for the council and subsequently to introduce June to the head of human resources with a proposal to start a Chaplaincy Service for the Council workers. God is able to do more than we can think or ask.

The spirit of God is working in the lives of many Christians working in Uxbridge. We pray that He will bring this all to fruition and that we may see lives transformed in many workplaces.

Chris Green

Parish Website

uxbridgeparish.org



uxbridgeparish.org

The past 12 months have been an exciting and fast-moving time for the parish website and, indeed, for me as its webmaster. The first few months of 2007 saw uxbridgeparish.org really begin to blossom with its new design and our more frequent reviews of its content meaning that it was more up to date for its readers. Also, we launched the Display Options tool, making the use of our website by those with impaired vision or colour blindness more comfortable and straight-forward. During the summer, the 'Latest News' service was transformed into what you see today, beginning with some notices and bulletin sheets available for download. In October we launched the seasonal part of the website: 'Christmas in the Uxbridge Parish', detailing all of the special services and events across the parish and town centre; and we estimate that this received well over 220 visits in November and December - to that point a record for any one page on the site.

January saw the official launch of online bulletin sheet downloads - since the beginning of the year we have been able to offer everyone free downloads of both churches' bulletin sheets before they are published each week on a Sunday and we have seen almost 500 downloads of these since then. What was probably the most important development for the website since its launch also came in January - the completion of the Content Management System, allowing people from across the parish to manage the content of their own pages. This invaluable tool means that each activity, service or 'aspect' of parish life has an opportunity to advertise itself, pass on its message and evangelise with an independence that had not been available until that point. We are still looking for more people to get involved and I would take this opportunity to encourage everyone to consider whether they could offer something to the website. If you are involved in any way with any aspect of church life and have access to a computer (even a public computer like the library) then please do email me at webmaster@uxbridgeparish.org for more information.

In February, as the weekly visitor count continued to rise, we launched an additional service to the 'Latest News' page: an RSS feed of all our headlines. This allows you to have our news delivered to your computer desktop (Windows Vista users), email inbox (Yahoo! Mail, Gmail and Hotmail users) or internet browser. Holy Week came and went, and the 'Easter in the Uxbridge Parish' page served as great publicity for the extra services of the season. The near future will see more documents available for download, starting with this Parish Annual Report and the PCC appointments - stay tuned for this! Finally, last month saw the redesign of the Parish Frontpage, with less writing, more graphics and big, clear links to the main sections of the website, as well as instant access to our site search tool; all aiming to make it even easier for you to find the information you want.

When I consider the future of uxbridgeparish.org, I am reminded instantly of our parish vision: "To see people's lives transformed in Uxbridge through knowing God's love and living Christ's way"; and it seems to me that, in this high-tech, constantly connected world we now find ourselves living in, there could not be a more appropriate way of reaching out to the people of our beloved Uxbridge than through the website. Now featured in the first page of results of almost any related Google/yahoo/live search including the word 'Uxbridge', our website is in an ideal position to call to the people of the area and to tell them of what we're doing, and to encourage them to join us. In the coming weeks and months I hope that you will be seeing even more of the Parish website and that in our seeking to continually serve the people of Uxbridge, and indeed Christ, uxbridgeparish.org will play an instrumental part in transforming the lives of the people of the town.

uxbridgeparish.org / uxbridgeparish.org / uxbridgeparish.org

St. Margaret's Prayer Ministry Report



The Prayer Ministry Team have met throughout the year before each healing service (bi-monthly) to prepare for that service by praying together and waiting on the Lord for words of knowledge regarding people in need of prayer who would be at the service.

Towards the end of 2007 Gill Higginson felt that she should stand down from leading the Prayer Ministry and we would like to thank her for her leadership and the time and care she has put into that role, and we are please that she is still part of the Prayer Ministry Team.

Since September 2007 June has taken over this leadership with Peggy Blake assisting as co-ordinator, we thank June too for her guidance and teaching, helping us to have an even more effective ministry to meet the needs of others.

We have invited five more people to become part of the team and have had several teaching sessions during our meetings for their benefit and as a 'refresher' for those of us who were already on the team. We have also spent time praying with and for each other and explored how we can listen to God more effectively. At our last meeting split into threes to do a Bible study, which we found very beneficial.

Because of our larger team we are now able to have a rota whereby two people are in the Chapel at the end of the 10.45am service every week to pray with people and many are taking advantage of this facility each week. We hope in the future to be able to extend this to the 9am and 7pm services too.

As we look back over the last year we thank God for answered prayer and we are very aware that we are only channels for the Holy Spirit to work through us to meet the needs of those who come to us, and we would pray that He will continue to equip us and use us in this work for Him, and to Him be the glory forever.

Peggy Blake

Praymates



I took over co-ordinating Praymates at the beginning of 2008 from Christine Benner, who did a wonderful job for the last seven years or so. She is a hard act to follow but I am trying.

Praymates has over many years has been an excellent ministry to the community. Many mums and carers have been supported and loved through their difficult times - through experiences such as cot deaths or infidelity, as well as sharing with others their better times such as celebrating new births. We have supported many folks with a rare adult conversation and a welcoming break in the overwhelming world of nappies and babble. We've also rejoiced to see several become part of the church family, having their children baptised and deepening their own faith.

In Praymates children hear traditional bible stories and lessons of the Christian faith, for many it is their first such experience of this. They also have fun in a toddler group environment with craft activities to re-enforce the story they heard that day.

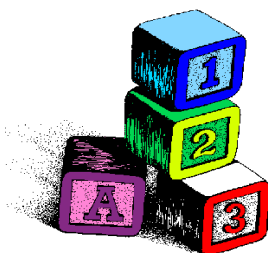
These two aspects of Praymates work connecting with God in worship and in play continue to be our aims. This summer the children will hear about the Lords Prayer and God's work in our Senses.

I am pleased to report that numbers are now at a manageable level. At the beginning of 2007 we were challenged by 80-90 people a week and now we average around 58 a week which is much more appropriate. This is largely due to the success of the Little People's Oasis, our sister group on Tuesdays but also as children grow and families move we have said good bye to several faithful friends this year. We do have a regular flow of people arrive with rarely a week going by without a new face. Our pool of regular attendees is just over 80 with about 47% of those being adult carers.

Praymates meets on a Wednesday morning and the team consists of Angie Doré, Sue Gough, Beryl Harper and my self. Four people is a minimum size for the team and we really notice when one person is missing. Recruiting one or two additional team members will soon be a priority. If God is exciting you in this area please get in touch.

Over the next year we will continue to focus on providing the opportunity for the carers and children who attend Praymates to experience God and his loving care. We will also look to strengthen the team and secure a safe environment for all attending Praymates.

Joanne Mackin



Little People's Oasis



We are well into our second year of operation now and have approximately 20 - 25 carers attending with their children on Tuesday mornings at St Margaret's in the upper room. We would very much welcome new members to join us on the "committee" to help run this group. It is very informal and relaxed, giving carers of small children the opportunity to meet with one another and chat over a cup of tea/coffee whilst the children play safely. Do join us on any term-time Tuesday from 10.00 am to 11.30 am and find out!

Jo Mason

Senior Alpha at St. Margaret's

This year some of the Songs of Praise Leadership embarked upon a new venture and, beginning in January, we ran a version of the Alpha course, designed for our more senior members. This is somewhat shorter than the original version and is called Senior Alpha.

It ran on Tuesday mornings, and most people then stayed on for the Songs of Praise service. We were very encouraged in that having started with four guests we increased to eight, although not all managed to attend every session. It was very pleasing to see the relationships within the group develop and strengthen, as the weeks went by, and to note that, by the halfway point, every guest was happily joining in with the discussions and most with the prayer times at the end.

We are planning to run another Senior Alpha course in the Autumn.

Welcome to St. Andrew's

We have been looking at how we can improve the welcome of our church and the development of this. We are in the process of restructuring and expanding the welcome team by introducing door welcomers and seated welcomers. We continue to update our photos so we each get to know names and faces.

Part of our new MAP is to clarify the role of the welcomers and introduce a pattern that we will follow. We will also develop a new welcome leaflet.

In the autumn of 2007 we had our annual welcome tea which was hosted by Fr Cliff and Dot.

*Do for others what you would like them to do for you.
Matthew 7:12*



World Mission (St. Margaret's)



During the last year and a bit, the mission sub-group has been reviewing our commitment to our five core mission partnerships:

- Diocese of Kisangani
- South American Mission Society (SAMS)
- Church Mission Society (CMS)
- Church Pastoral Aid Society (CPAS)
- A Rocha

In the process, we are indebted to CMS who are giving us valuable time and guidance as we seek to be thorough in our thinking, prayer and action.

One important outcome of our deliberations has been in working to establish personal links with partners 'in the field' (if we can be forgiven for using a good old-fashioned expression). The Church Council have approved that part of our annual financial contributions to SAMS and CMS should be allocated to the ongoing support of the Yanez family in Europe and to Yvonne in the near-East. A third link is being established with a CPAS staff member, also called Yvonne, whose specialism in relation to young children has already been of benefit to St. Margaret's 'in house' leaders and also some of Emma's (parish) PromiseLand team.

Time has been spent in enhancing our contact with Kisangani (Democratic Republic of Congo) and with A Rocha. We hope that the Bishop of Kisangani and his wife will be visiting our parish for a few days in June prior to attending the Lambeth Conference of bishops in July, in the steps of his predecessor who did likewise in 1988 and 1998.

Involvement with A Rocha is more in the nature of team activity, since we have their UK and international hub right on our doorstep in Hayes/Southall. They operate the nature reserve in Hayes Country Park and the floating classroom on the Grand Union Canal in a cross-cultural initiative. Their most recent visitor to us was Sian Hawkins who memorably came to talk to us on Harvest Sunday last year about our role in relation to climate change. Who can forget her visual aid – the impressive ice globe! And her message that, in Jesus, we have hope for the future.

In signing off this report it is fair to say that, in exploring 'global local' issues we are becoming more aware of the possibility of two, three and four way activity in God's Mission in the World.